



ePartners Forum Spreads the Word about Savings

By Adam Liegeot

Everyone wins when towns, schools, and not-for-profits are able to save time and money.

That was the message conveyed at the ePartners forum, which was held at the West Hartford Town Hall this month.

ePartners urges municipalities and non-profits to utilize state contracts, post bids on the DAS website, and access a list of certified Connecticut small and minority business enterprises.

About 50 municipal, nonprofit, and state college officials attended the forum, listening to presentations from Jim Passier, Barbara Moser, Paul Greco, Carlos Velez, John Pacholski, Carol Wilson, Deb Hearl, and Maureen Friedman.

Greco, for example, talked trash with the audience.

"The state spends \$3.9 million a year on trash removal," he said, as he discussed

how 43 separate trash removal contracts will be consolidated in the near future. He asked town officials to review the current costs and compare them to the savings they could see if they piggy-backed off of state contracts instead.



ePartner Barbara Moser addresses the Forum

So how did the crowd react to this idea of partnering together to save money and improve services?

"The evaluation forms came back overwhelmingly positive with lots of interest in the P-Card program, Contractor Prequalification Program, EPP Cleaners, Connecticut Correctional Enterprises, Bid Posing for Municipalities, Indoor Air Quality Contracts, and Rubbish Removal," said Barbara Moser, ePartner and EPP coordinator.

"Many of the attendees wrote down that all the presentations were of interest."

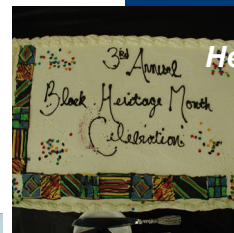
The event appears to have built momentum for future successes.

"From the Forum, I have scheduled five appointments with nonprofit providers interested in more information on using our contracts," Moser said. "I'm also following up with three towns not at the forum, but interested in our contracts."



Carlos Velez, Lynn Peccerillo, and Kerry DiMatteo prepare to greet municipal representatives

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Employees Embrace Black Heritage Month Events

By John McKay

It was a time for celebration, song, laughter and remembrance as the State Office Building celebrated Black Heritage Month in February.

The event poignantly opened with a moment of silence in tribute to Janis Nome, who first pioneered the need for diversity training at DAS and eventually statewide.

Following the United States National Anthem and the Negro National Anthem, Commissioners in the SOB offered greetings and opening remarks.

The event continued with the readings of both Nelson Mandela and Paul Robeson followed by the unveiling of the Paul Robeson postage stamp.

The Harvest Time Choir Full Gospel Interdenominational Church of Manchester sang a moving rendition of "Glory, Glory Hallelujah."

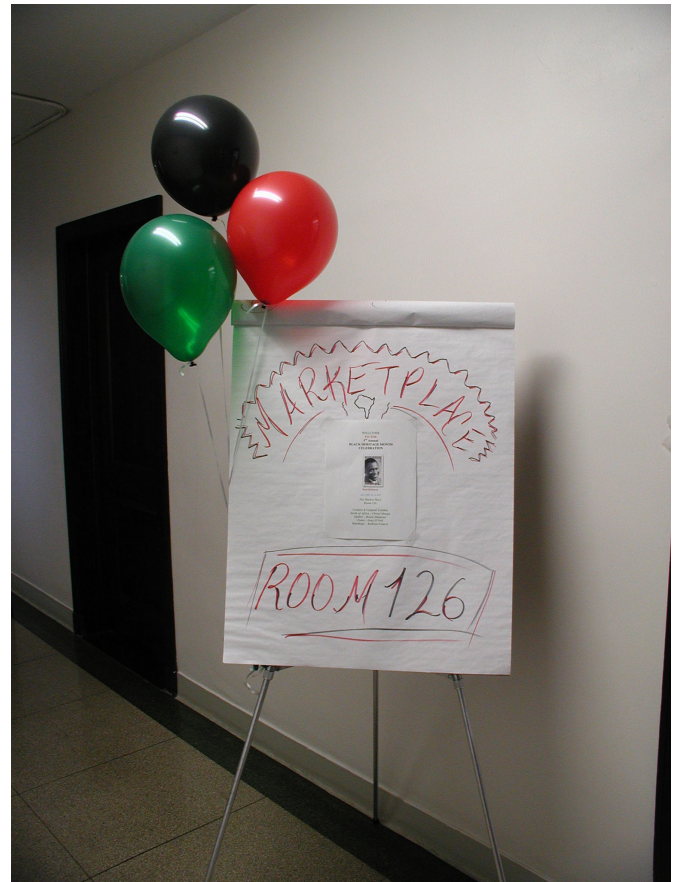
Guest speaker Minister Cornell Lewis then spoke on healing the problems of Hartford and positive ways of getting people involved in the inner city.

In 1994 Lewis spearheaded a movement to

clean up his neighborhood of drug dealers, and he founded Communities Against Drugs as a response to the July 4, 2000 shooting of seven year-old Takira Gaston. He is also the cofounder of the Men of Color Initiative.

What are DAS folks saying about Black Heritage Month?

See the next page!



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The readings were special, the Mandela excerpt was inspiring but the Robeson tribute by deLinda Brown – Jange was a work of art. In a few words the life of Paul Robeson

I thought this year's Black Heritage Month celebration was fantastic! Every one of the featured speakers gave so much insight on black history before our time and what is going on here in the present, that it was truly a history lesson for me. I truly enjoyed it. I now have so much respect for the late Paul Robeson, for all he endured during his life that I never knew about. The Harvest Time choir really sang! Bravo to the planning committee for bringing such a wonderful presentation here to the State Office Building. **-Charlene Lindee**

I was very impressed with the Black Heritage celebration program and enjoyed it very much. From the singing, especially, the choir, and not just because it was my church choir - the poetry was awesome and Minister Cornell Lewis was outstanding. It was a history lesson for me and I left with information that I didn't know before. I have such a respect not only for Paul Robeson, but also for all the black historians who paved the way. It makes me proud to be who I am. **-Lori Coleman**

“The two years that I helped out with Black Heritage Month have been great for me. I love working with, and meeting other people in the building, from other agencies. I think it is an important celebration, and a good way to bring people together. **- Laura Guilmartin**

Excellent job! Thanks to all who made it possible! The singing of both the United States National Anthem and the Negro National Anthem was so nice. I have never been exposed to the Negro National Anthem until today...I was very moved. I was captivated by the tribute to Robeson from deLinda Brown-Jange...she was incredible, and the Harvest Time Choir - what can you say? AWE-SOME! **-Tracie Knapsack**

I was very moved by the moment of silence awarded to Janis Nome in recognition for all of her contributions to Diversity. In fact, all of the speakers were sincere and moving. **-Vin Lombardo**

was captured. She cleverly painted a verbal portrait of his accomplishments, beliefs and personal sufferings.

The guest speaker, Minister Cornell Lewis was so interesting and convincing in his fight to move Hartford forward. I have read articles about him in area newspapers. I admire him for putting his life on the line and standing up against crime to take back Hartford streets and neighborhoods. He is a shaker and a mover and not afraid to address societal problems. You could tell you were in the company of a man on a mission and meant to be a leader.

You would have had to pay good money to attend a program of this caliber at the Bushnell. The full committee should be praised for SOB's quality celebration of Black Heritage Month. It was informative, entertaining and enjoyable. "You're only as big as the world you are interested in." It was a day to grow.

- Mayme Casady

See Page 9 for more Diversity Happenings!



Denise Tyburski from the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) thanked the **DAS staff** that helped to make “the RN Hiring Day so successful! What a successful collaboration between DAS and DMHAS. We are very pleased with the results of the day and all the efforts provided by DAS... So congratulations to all of you! The day could not have been a success without all of your hard work, planning and enthusiasm. What a great team effort!”

Kerry Robinson from the Department of Social Services (DSS) wrote to Gale Mattison from Core-CT regarding **Joann Bellamo's** help to DSS with Core. Kerry wrote: “as a very frequent user of the Core-CT system, I would like to express my thanks for the meeting we had with Joann Bellamo on January 20, as well as the training session with Holly Osburn and Jeri Vandiver on January 22. The ladies were extremely well-informed and were able to answer all questions proposed to them. It is nice to have someone to go to who can give you the correct advice and be willing to help. Again – Thanks.”

hats off

By Cindy Rusczyk

Carl Passanisi from the Department of Motor Vehicles commended the **Communications Office** for the January issue of the DAS Times. “I wanted to pass my ‘congrats’ to the Communications staff. I just read a copy of the newsletter and wanted to tell you it was a fabulous issue, especially the article about our friend Janis. Keep up the good work!”

Mark Carozza applauded **Bill Skyrme** for being “most helpful to me

and the Business Connections Unit in recent weeks. I demand that he be rewarded with a big fat bonus in his next paycheck. If this is not possible, simply give him a pat on the back and say it's from me (next best thing). Thanks!”

Commissioner Darlene Dunbar from the Department of Children and Families (DCF) thanked **Commissioner Barbara Waters and Linda Hubeny, Jim Potyra, Fred Ondevilla, Peter Varhol, Dan Sadowski, Lynn Peccerillo, and Adam Liegeot** for “the outstanding work and assistance that you provided DCF at Long Lane School. Disposing of all the equipment from a 225,000 square foot facility that was located at the same site for 130 years was no less than daunting and couldn't have been accomplished in the time allotted without the expertise and hard work of your very professional and able staff. Your department assembled an exceptional team of individuals that came in and took over this project, efficiently and effectively. They made this impossible job possible, and we can't thank them or you enough for all of your efforts. We are very grateful.”

Linda Lach from the Office of Policy and Management praised **Dan Duggan** for his “photograph that has been chosen for the cover art for the FY'05 Midterm Budget books and website. The photo is entitled ‘State Capital from the State Library.’ We will forward you a copy of the FY'05 Midterm Budget Adjustments book. Congratulations and thank you so much for your beautiful photograph.”

Jim Passier applauded **Anna Tara** for the help that she provided with his PC. “I hijacked Anna yesterday when she was unfortunate enough to be walking through Procurement. I was having a problem with the sound on

my PC - like there wasn't any. I asked if she could look at it when she had a chance. Anyway she jumped on it right away and had it fixed in almost nothing flat. We appreciate all the help MIS provides. Thanks.”

Patsy McLaughlin received a message from Christopher Stan from the Department of Public Health about **Bill Skyrme** stating how “he is very impressed with how ‘quick and painless’ the process was to place their press release and link to their new educational website on our DAS nursing website. He said it really shows how agencies can work together to assist each other and the public. He praised his work as our webmaster and said the DAS website is always an active site with new information for agencies and the public. Kudos to Bill!”

Reuben Jonathan-Lusack wrote the following message to Commissioner Waters:

Dear Barbara, I just wanted to drop you a quick note concerning how thankful we should all be to have **Mary Gugliemino** working at DAS. I've been dealing with some unpleasant, emotion-laden personal issues for the past two years or so, and I must say she's been incredibly caring and sympathetic to me. Her expertise has helped me successfully balance the chaos and anxiety in my personal life with my professional life, so as to not violate any personnel rules/regulations. She's indeed an exemplary employee and a wonderful person who has effectively helped make my life so much easier during this difficult period of my life. I'm keenly aware of a unique and laudable aspect of our ‘DAS Family Culture’: the recognition of one another's accomplishments, so I do now seize the opportunity to express these sentiments on behalf of Mary Gugliemino.”

Leveraged Purchasing May Save State Millions

By Adam Liegeot

More and more state governments are taking a closer look at purchasing as a way to save money in tight fiscal times before turning to more difficult steps, such as cutting programs.

And Connecticut is no different.

"The state has hired a Boston-based consulting firm to help find savings in a wide variety of purchases, from cars to copy supplies," said Commissioner Barbara Waters.

Several employees of the firm Silver Oak Solutions have set up shop on the ground floor of the State Office Building and have been working closely with the DAS Procurement Office.

"Jim Passier, Carol Wilson, who is the project manager, and their staff have been doing an outstanding job. I have no doubt that this program will identify millions of dollars in savings per year as the state negotiates better deals on the goods it buys," Waters said.

Passier explained that in order to

deliver the best value for taxpayers' dollars, DAS has taken a line-by-line look at how and what the state buys in purchased goods to discover potential savings.

That requires approaching every supplier to discover exactly what they are selling to the state.

"It also requires meetings with every state agency to see how DAS may be able to get them a better price on what they are buying," said Wilson.

Once this information is gathered, DAS will have three very valuable tools:

- comprehensive report of all spending across every agency and department
- review of supplier contracts at the state and agency level
- review of all specifications, pricing, and purchasing policies for several dozen categories of goods and services being purchased by one or more state agencies

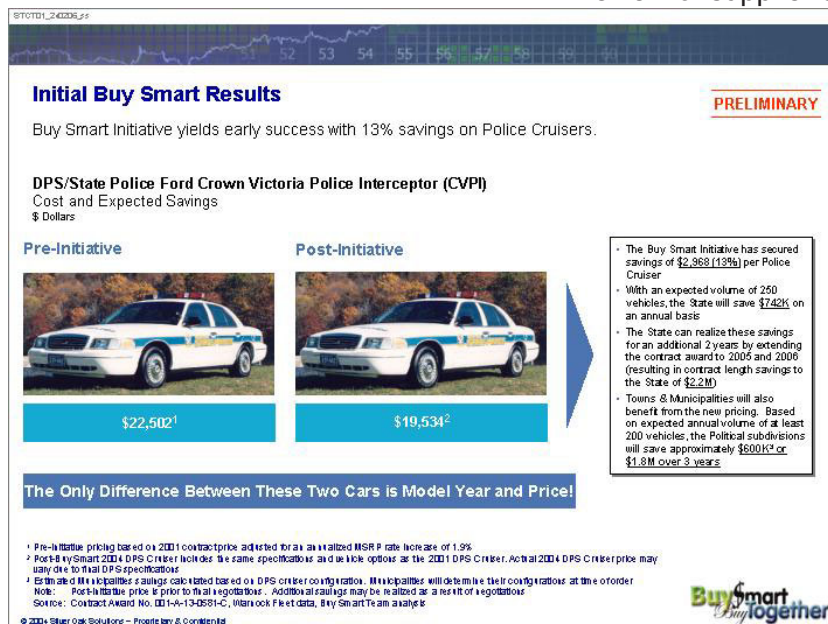
Brian Selander of Silver Oaks Solutions added that "in the weeks ahead, we will continue to move forward with that information to create better pricing for everyone."

Commissioner Waters named the campaign "Buy Smart...Buy Together" because it is applying some common sense ideas on how and what our state buys.

"We're empowering agencies to harness their bulk purchasing power and achieve the best combination of quality, service and price," she said. "We're going to see millions of dollars in annual savings for our state's families, companies, agencies and government."



Commissioner Barbara Waters unveils the Buy Smart---Buy Together mascot at the February 11 Spend Management luncheon. The luncheon was a celebration of the release of many of the RFP's. The dollar sign mascot was a state surplus relic left from the days of the retail store in Wethersfield!



The soulful music and magic of Sammy Thompson

If music is harmony, then the newest member of the diversity team should bring some high notes to the melody of the DAS Diversity Council.

A mail courier by day and singer by night, Sammy Thompson of DAS Mail and Courier will soon be noted not only for his incredible singing voice, but also for his powerful voice as a member of the DAS Diversity Council.

Bursting with energy, Thompson brings to the council a song book of ideas he carries with true passion.

To know Sammy is to know his warm, gentle eyes, infectious smile and a set of vocal chords that can belt out Aretha Franklin or exhale a mellow yet raspy Johnny Mathis tune.

But to know Sammy is also to know his soulful magical voice and music that land him center stage in popular nightclubs, all too often were composed to heal wounds of personal tragedy.

Department of Children and Families, whom he considers a role model.

"Mike used to always tell me-You just don't give up, stand up and fight for what is right," Thompson recants.

In 1988 tragedy struck again when his closest sister Patricia, then 22, was found strangled in Hartford's Keeney Park—a case that remains open today.

"I wrote *Patricia* for my sister. Then after I spent a long period of time never leaving my house, I decided to do something about her unresolved murder," Thompson said.

In 1991 and 1992 Sammy dedicated many hours rallying for a group formed by the late Chief State's Attorney Jack Bailey called "The Victims of Homicide." This statewide task force was created for the benefit of families of women murdered in Connecticut.

Now, nearly 16 years since Patricia's death, he hopes that the rapidly advancing DNA technologies can help bring closure to this cold case.

Today, closing in on 40, he finds himself getting more involved with his godchildren. He smiles and tilts his head to shield the question about any plans for him and Gwen, his significant other of 23 years.

"Some of us are not meant to BE parents, but are meant to BE there to



Is this the face of a DAS employee or a performing artist? If you said, "both", you're right. Meet Sammy Thompson.

help. I spend a lot of time with my godsons Cesar (15), Little William (6), and Keandre (4) and my nieces and nephews. I enjoy going up to Cesar's school, Lewis Fox Middle School and helping out with the kids."

Thompson's giant talent has landed him performing jobs at famous clubs such as The Apollo in New York City and Double Tree Hotel in La Mesa, California. Locally, you can catch a performance at some Hartford clubs: Piggy's at Laurel and Hawthorne, Cousins Café and The Factory. He is currently producing a CD of music he has written.

Sammy closed this interview with a smile that brightened the room like a gemstone, "Music is about love."

up close

By Nina Ritson

At a very young age, Thompson was the lead vocal in the junior choir of the Faithful Holy Mission House of Prayer in Norwalk.

He lived there with his mother and father (the minister of the church) and three sisters. Suddenly, for reasons he was too young to understand at the time, he was taken from his natural family and placed in a foster home.

He speaks fondly of the Petersons, his foster parents, as well as his *Big Brother* Mike Schultz from the

What's New Online @ DAS?

By John McKay

The DAS website is having a growth spurt.

And we're not talking about the over 2.5 million hits since 2001.

New features on the site have been instrumental in the success of a number of DAS initiatives.

Take, for example, the job fairs DAS has run for other state agencies.



"We wouldn't have been able to schedule interviews and hire 150 health care

professionals for DMHAS and DCF if it weren't for our website," said HR's Pam Libby. "It's a tremendous tool."

The nursing section of the DAS website not only recruits nurses, it shows that the State of Connecticut rewards them as well. The website is promoting National Nurses Week in May with information and the eventual announcement of the State Nurse of the Year Award recipient.

HR's not the only one taking advantage of the website.

Carlos Velez and Aimee Gagnon of the Business Advisory Group are beginning to get their programs online. Both the Contractor Prequalification Program and Master Insurance Program have armed their new sites with FAQ's, downloadable forms, and information links to educate and inform their customers.

"We're in the early stages of educating our customers about our website," said Velez, "But the feedback has already been very positive." Gagnon agrees, "It's great to be able to go to a conference and refer customers to our website. You're really considered prehistoric if you don't have a website."

Procurement's *WIN Newsletter* continues to add numbers to their subscription list. "Being able to have

the *WIN Newsletter* posted online and searchable on our website is great for our customers," said newsletter publisher Teresa Dupont. "If a customer calls about an old article, I simply refer them to our section of the website – it's that easy."

The Strategic Services Learning Center is gearing up to put an interactive Workforce Planning area online for state agencies.

"There's been a real demand for succession planning from state agencies," said Steve Soklow. "This will help guide them to prepare for the future of their agency and give

them a resource they never had before."

"Buy Smart...Buy Together, DAS' new spend management program, also has a brand new presence on the web that includes FAQ's, contacts and a great visual that captures the intent of the program.

"Our objective is clear," said Commissioner Barbara Waters. "The Internet is a growing and incredibly useful tool for both customers and employees. The more we expand and become a valuable resource, the better we are able to serve everyone involved."

DAS Partners with DMHAS to recruit, hire nurses

By Adam Liegeot

HR is on a roll with a string of successful Hiring Days, the most recent event to recruit registered nurses was on February 5 in Middletown.

"This marked the second straight Hiring Day dedicated to recruiting nurses to work for DMHAS, and, given the national shortage, the results have been phenomenal," said Commissioner Barbara Waters.

"The state has hired 22 registered nurses and met its RN staffing requirements at DMHAS facilities in Hartford, Stamford, and Bridgeport," Waters said.

And there's nothing like mass media to spread the word.

WTNH-TV Channel 8 in New Haven asked Deputy Commissioner Al Mazzola to appear in a live, in-studio interview during the 5:30 news broadcast to discuss DAS' hiring efforts.

Mazzola told Channel 8 anchors Ann Nyberg and Keith Kountz about the national nursing shortage, emphasized the benefits of working for the state, and urged interested parties to visit the DAS website to

schedule their own interviews and obtain further information about the RN positions.

Mazzola's television appearance clearly helped drive people to the website.

"We don't know if any Mazzola fan clubs sprang up, but we do know that nearly 1,600 people visited the nurse recruitment portion of the site since he went on camera," said Communications Director Donna Micklus.

February's Hiring Day was another in a series of blockbuster DAS/HR recruitment events.

In October, DAS held three job fairs, hiring over 100 social workers to work at DCF. On November 18, a Hiring Day was held at Middletown's Riverview Hospital that resulted in the hiring of over a dozen DCF nurses. In December, a Correction Officer recruitment drive spurred 3,586 people to apply online, while DAS's January 16 Hiring Day for RNs resulted in nearly 100 interviews and 21 hires.

"Congratulations to the entire HR staff. It was a great team effort," said Waters.

Commissioner Tells Legislature How DAS is Saving, Making Money

By Adam Liegeot

Commissioner Barbara Waters recently testified before the Connecticut General Assembly's Appropriations Committee, discussing DAS initiatives and budgetary matters.

The Commissioner's presentation, titled "Save Money, Make Money," kept the focus on the following "Big 8" themes:

- Opening government through online services
- Making purchases for state government in ways that save more money
- Reducing the size of the state fleet along with fleet-associated costs
- Developing new collections strategies and projects to bring in more revenue
- Reducing the costs of Workers' Compensation in state government
- Reducing expenses for print, mail, and courier
- Conducting Human Resources Strategic Management
- Being more aggressive in the management and costs of our assets

Waters presented the committee with information on a host of DAS accomplishments. For example, she bragged about how Collections was able to bring in more revenue this year and top the \$700 million mark even with a 41% reduction in staff.

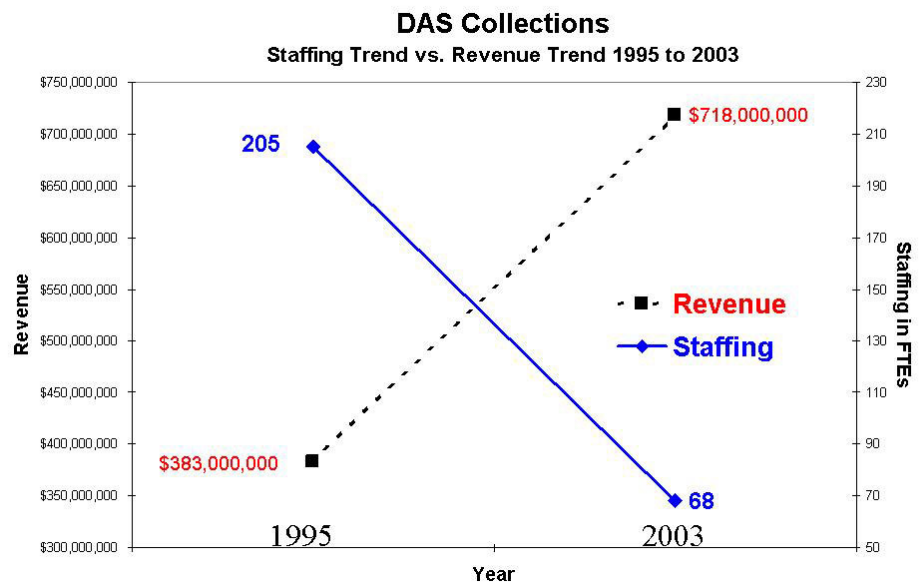
2004 Appropriations



*Save Money,
Make Money*

Department of Administrative Services

BARBARA A. WATERS
Commissioner



The Commissioner included the above referenced chart in her presentation.

After fielding questions from legislators for 90 minutes, Commissioner Waters was thanked by the Appropriations Committee for a job well done.

The Commissioner thanked Alan Mazzola for fielding many of the legislators' questions and thanked the

entire DAS staff for enabling her to make such a comprehensive presentation.

"Overall, I'm happy to say we're in good shape," Commissioner Waters said. "The Office of Policy and Management restored \$220,000 to backfill positions we lost to the Core-CT project, but other than that, there were no major changes."



Happenings

...our strength is in our differences

By Maureen Friedman



Recognize any of the children in this photo?

If you took part in the Diversity Council's viewing of the classic video on diversity entitled "**A Class Divided**," that was held on January 13, you probably do!

Jane Elliott, a schoolteacher in an all-white Iowa town, divided her third grade into blue-eyed and brown-eyed groups and gave them a daring lesson in discrimination. Her experiment had a lasting impact on the children that continues to endure thirty years later.

This video presentation was well received by the 45 people that attended. The viewing was followed by an open discussion facilitated by Jack Hasegawa, Coordinator for Education Preparation Program Approval, CT State Department of Education.

The Diversity council will offer the second part of "**A Class Divided**" where Ms. Elliott takes her exercise to employees of the Iowa prison system. During a daylong workshop in human relations, she teaches the same lesson to the adults. Their reactions to the blue-eyes, brown-eyes exercise are similar to those of the children.

Watch for the show date in a future Diversitygram!

"**Cultural Competence for Communities of the Future**" was held on February 26. In this vastly increasing diverse population, it is imperative that the workplace maintain a high quality of knowledge, skills and dispositions in cultural competence.

This workshop focused on practical applications required for personnel who work with customers and colleagues from a variety of diverse backgrounds. This interactive diversity session covered key skills in becoming a culturally competent employee.

The presenter was William A. Howe, Ed.D, Consultant for Multicultural Education & Gender Equality, Connecticut State Department of Education. Dr. Howe has been an educator for over 25 years in the United States and Canada.

Reactions to "A Class Divided"

"This film moved me to tears. I was appalled at how quickly and readily the children took to the exercise and their roles as superior. It showed me that it doesn't take much effort to create discrimination, and how important the small gestures really are."

"I wish more of our staff attended. It reminded me to "do unto others as they would do unto you"; will look at

my approach in future dealings to ensure this."

"I thought this presentation was extremely interesting, also very disturbing. I think all children and adults should be involved in some kind of experiment like this. I am looking forward to the next one!

Diversity Council Good-byes and Hellos

We have to say good-bye to four of our dedicated and loyal Diversity Council members who have completed their terms of duty. Thank you for all of your hard work. We will miss you!

Reuben-Jonathan Lusack, BE
Deb Atkinson, HR
Joyce Chin, HR
Belinda Hall, Fleet

We offer a warm welcome to our four new Diversity Council members. Thank you for volunteering your time and energy. We look forward to working with you!

Sam Thompson, BE
Laura Guilmartin, BAGS
Carlos Kebe, FSC
Jay Tulin, HR